

e-bulletin

October 2007

Welcome to the third e-bulletin for this year. In this issue we highlight the Formaldehyde Science Conference held in Spain, activities in the area of VOC emissions and a feature on carbon emission trading.

As always if you have any comments or wish to follow up on any items please contact us.

Cheers Glenn

Formaldehyde Science Conference

FormaCare held their science conference in Barcelona in September with representatives from some of the most distinguished institutes from Germany, Sweden, UK, the Netherlands, Israel, USA and Brazil participating. The bottom line of the conference was:

“The common use of formaldehyde in consumer products and other applications does not pose a risk to human health.”

This assertion is based on published and soon to be published research which indicates:

- **Evidence for NPC formation highly ambiguous**

One epidemiological study shows an increased nasopharyngeal cancer (NPC) mortality related to formaldehyde (mainly only in 1 out of 10 plants). However, this is challenged by two other large studies which show no such association. Furthermore, a new study of the plant with the NPC cluster reveals that co-exposure by silver smithing and other metal work should be considered as potential causes for NPC in this specific plant. In the critical review by IARC the peculiar results of this single plant were not taken into account.

- **Formaldehyde related leukemia highly improbable**

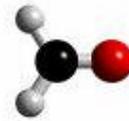
Most scientists agree that a causal connection between formaldehyde exposure and leukemia formation is highly improbable. The reason: The mechanistic data in

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highly improbable. The reason: The mechanistic data in question is valid only to hint at possible local tumor developments (e. g. in the upper respiratory tract after inhalation), but not at tumor developments at sites far off first contact areas.

- **No mutagenic effects observed**

Mutagenic effects generally have not been observed in animal experiments, only DNA-protein cross-links (DPX) as markers of exposure. Most scientists agree that DPX formation is not driving tumor development, but (cytotoxic) irritation leading to cell death followed by an increase in cell division that may finally lead to tumors. Without cell death tumors are not expected. According to a new study, no mutagenic effect was found in cells of the mouth of human volunteers exposed for short periods to formaldehyde under workplace exposure conditions.



- **Thresholds prevent sensory irritation**

In the normal living environment or at the workplace, formaldehyde exposure is not expected to lead to sensory irritation. The threshold for sensory irritation is clearly lower than that leading to cell death. Concentrations of 0.5 ppm or 0.3 ppm with peaks of 0.6 ppm will not lead to objective signs of sensory irritation.

More detailed information and copies of the presentations can be found on the FormaCare web-site at:

http://www.formaldehyde-europe.org/pages/International_Formaldehyde_Sci.135.0.html

VOC emissions

VOC emissions from building materials are becoming an area for concern in Europe. The regulatory requirements are beginning to tighten with the requirement for flooring materials in Germany to conform to the DeBit requirement. These requirements are not specifically aimed at wood panel products but there are potential issues with the emissions of Aldehydes and Terpenes depending on the wood species and processing used.

Carbon Trading

The Australian Federal Government has announced that it will develop a national carbon trading scheme. A task force has been operating to develop the proposed system and take submissions from stakeholders.

The timber industry has been active in putting their position to the task force. In summary the main points that have been made are:

The timber industry is not opposed to a trading scheme but the scheme should:

- Allow abatement credits through forestry.
- Recognise the sequestration potential of wood products in use and after disposal.
- Competing materials in the domestic market (steel, concrete etc) must face the full cost of their carbon emissions.
- Imported products should face the same cost of carbon emissions as locally produced materials.
- Ensure that a high level of abatement investment occurs locally.

For more details contact us or visit:

http://www.pmc.gov.au/climate_change/emissions/index.cfm

And another ting.....

I must admit I'm a bit of a sucker for Irish jokes, it must be my Irish heritage! Anyway here's one I chuckled about.

An Irishman goes to the Doctor with botty problems....

"Dactor, it's me buckside. I'd loik ya ta teyhk a look, if ya woot".

So the doctor gets him to drop his pants and takes a look.

"Incredible" he says, "there is a GBP20 note lodged up here."

Tentatively he eases the twenty out of the man's bottom, and then a 10 pound note appears.

"This is amazing!" exclaims the Doctor. What do you want me to do?"

"Well fur gadness sake teyhk it out, man!" shrieks the



(illustration David Rowe)



patient.

The doctor pulls out the tenner and another twenty appears, and another and another and another, etc.... Finally the last note comes out and no more appear.

"Ah Dactor, tank ya koindly, dat's moch batt er . How moch is dareden?"

The Doctor counts the pile of cash. "GBP1,990 exactly."

"Ah, dat'd be roit", says the Irishman "I knew I wasn't feeling two grand....."

About Us.

Tech Partners Australia is an independent Technical Service provider to the composite wood panels industry. Glenn Ryan who has 25 years experience in industry runs the organization. His experience covers Quality Management, Technical Service and R&D Management.

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